

High Mountain Dams in Upalco Unit,  
Drift Lake Dam  
Ashley National Forest  
11.4 miles northwest of Swift Creek Campground  
Mountain Home Vicinity  
Duchesne County  
Utah

HAER No. UT-42-E

HAER  
UTAH,  
7-MOH0.V,  
1-E-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORIC AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record  
Rocky Mountain Regional Office  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver, Colorado 80537

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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High Mountain Dams in Upalco Unit, Drift Lake Dam

HAER No. UT-42-E

Location: 11.4 miles northwest of Swift Creek Campground, Ashley National Forest  
Mountain Home vicinity, Duchesne County, Utah

UTM: 12.543180.4505660  
Quad: Garfield Basin

Date of Construction: 1928

Builder/Designer: Farmers Irrigation Company

Present Owner: Moon Lake Water Users Association, Roosevelt, Utah 84066

Original Use: Dam

Present Use: Dam

Significance: Drift Lake is one of several natural high mountain lakes in the Swift Creek  
and Yellowstone River drainages dammed by the Farmers Irrigation  
Company in the 1920s and 1930s to store water for irrigation. The dam is  
a representative example of small-scale earth-fill construction in the Upalco  
Unit of the Central Utah Project.

Inventoried by: Clayton Fraser and James Jurale  
Fraserdesign  
Loveland, Colorado

October 19, 1985

### HISTORICAL INFORMATION

On July 21, 1926, the National Forest Service granted special use permits to the Farmers Irrigation Company for water storage rights on Bluebell and Drift lakes, two high mountain lakes in the Yellowstone River drainage. Drift Lake, the smaller of the two, was an elongated natural pool, a quarter mile long and 300 yards at its widest point, located in a cirque at the base of a rock slide ridge. The Forest Service recommended that a 100-foot-long by 7-foot-high dam across the southeastern outlet of the lake would greatly increase its active storage capacity. The structure that the irrigation company completed in 1928 was more than twice as long and 12 feet high, substantially increasing the lake's volume. The dam featured standard earth-fill construction, with a variable-slope upstream face covered with a layer of hand-placed riprap stone. Its outlet was a 24-inch corrugated steel pipe with an upright screw-type gate. The original dam and outlet remain. It is proposed that the dam be breached and a spillway built through it to lower the water to within four feet of its natural level.

### ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

Dam length: 235 feet  
Dam height: 12 feet  
Dam width: 5 feet  
Construct: Earth fill dam with stone riprap facing  
Lake size: 24.8 acres; 197 acre-foot maximum capacity; 9 vertical foot maximum drawdown  
Outlet: Gated steel pipe

### BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

"Preliminary Engineering Report: Stabilization of High Mountain Lakes, Upalco Unit," National Forest Service Report, 1970, page 29.

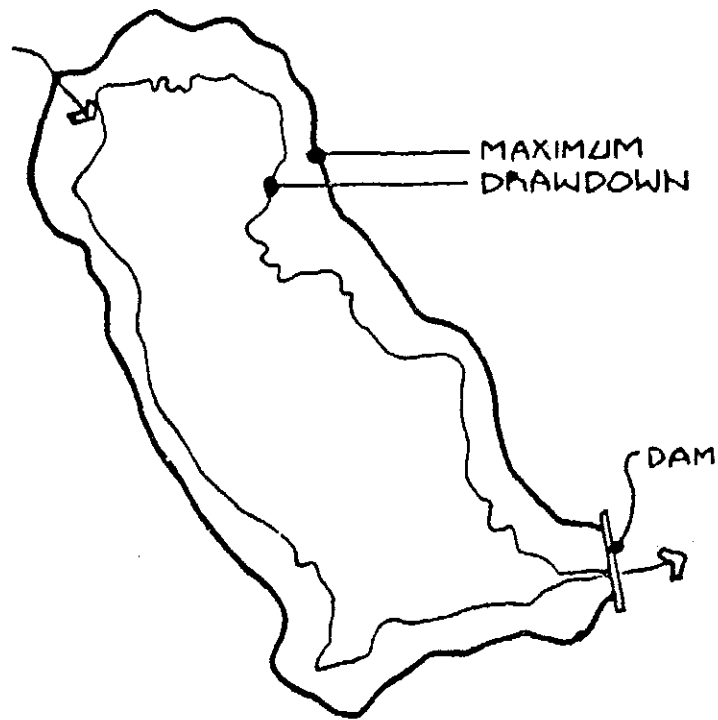
William F. Gettleman, "Report on the Lakes and Reservoir of the Headwaters of the Uintah, Whiterocks and Lakefork Rivers, Uintah Project, Utah; February 1932," page 21.

Drift Lake Reservoir File #16-E, Roosevelt District Ranger Office, Ashley National Forest, Roosevelt, Utah.

Field inspection by Robert Richter, July 28, 1985.

For additional information, see Irrigation Canals in the Uinta Basin, HAER No. UT-30.

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SCALE: 1" = 600'